

**Testimony of Rep. Theresa Conroy  
State Representative, 105<sup>th</sup> District**

**on**

**HB 5495 An Act Establishing the River Falls Improvement District  
within the Town of Seymour**

Good morning Senator Daily, Representative Staples and other distinguished members of the Finance Committee. For the record, my name is Theresa Conroy and I represent the 105<sup>th</sup> Assembly District, which includes the towns of Seymour, Beacon Falls and part of Ansonia. I am here to testify in favor of **HB 5495 An Act Establishing the River Falls Improvement District within the Town of Seymour.**

The town of Seymour is working diligently on promoting economic growth. Currently, homeowners are sharing the burden of taxes at 89%, while businesses pay the other 11%. As a former mill town, Seymour has seen her share of companies closing. This bill will help establish an improvement district, allowing the property owners in that district to issue bonds to finance the costs of environmental remediation and related costs. Because the bonds will be issued by the newly formed district, there will be no obligations by the Town of Seymour. Rather, debt service on the bonds would be paid from incremental real estate taxes generated by the project within the District pursuant to a tax sharing agreement.

The River Falls project will combine the old empty Seymour Lumber Company located on Route 67 with the now empty Housatonic Wire, which is adjacent on River Street, another state road. Dividing the two properties is the Little River with two beautiful waterfalls. The concept plan would allow for a public park in the center of the project, which would be a great addition to the town.

Seymour is ideal for transit oriented development. The Waterbury Branch line of Metro North runs through the downtown area and has a stop there. The Naugatuck River, which has seen tremendous improvements, also runs through downtown, directly across from this project. The Tigue Falls Fish Bypass is scheduled to begin this spring, which will allow fish to come upriver to spawn. The infrastructure is in place with Route 8 and Route 67 as major thoroughfares for the area.

River Falls is an ideal project that will be the catalyst for other areas to be developed. Its central location will give other developers incentives to develop their holdings. I ask that serious consideration is given to HB 5494 to pass it out of committee.